

✓ SC #07244/63-KH
PID/IB 159/63
25 July 1963
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MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, NSA/PO56/A43

THRU: [redacted] NSA/LO, NPIC

ATTENTION: [redacted]

FROM: Chief, CIA/PID(NPIC)

SUBJECT: Search for Nuclear Power Stations in
Magadan Oblast, USSR

Declass Review by NGA.

REFERENCES: Requirement No. NSA/PO56/R37-63
CIA Project No. C 609-63

1. This memorandum is forwarded in answer to the referenced requirement concerning a search for possible nuclear power station construction near the towns of Bilibino and Aliskerovo in Magadan Oblast, USSR.

2. The search and analysis of available photography within the area for suspected plant construction (see Figure 1) did not reveal any confirmed facilities or any construction sites that could be correlated with the dates and places given in COMINT publication 3/ARU-E/T8213. It is conceivable, that due to the remoteness of the area and the poor means of transportation leading to the area, that construction work on the plant has not yet begun. Also, considering the possible accumulation of construction materials that would be necessary prior to construction, more time would be necessary to detect such construction, hence, another check at a future date may reveal more evidence. These sites were coordinated with analysts from the Joint Photographic Analysis Group (JAG/NPIC) for their analysis concerning any reactor possibilities and their analysis of the plants was essentially the same as that given above.

3. The area of search is located in the extreme northeast corner of the USSR between geographic coordinates 165°-169° longitude and 67°-69° latitude. The search area covered approximately 8,000 square miles centering on the towns of Bilibino and Aliskerovo. All available photography, namely satellite, covering this area was utilized in the search and analysis for this memorandum. The best of these missions were [redacted]

4. The photo search did not reveal many apparent changes within the search area between the photo dates mentioned above. The only significant change noted was the construction of a probable landing

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area just west of Koperovoyem. It appears to be in very early stages of construction on photography of [] (see Figure 3 and Inset). The probable runway measures approximately 2,400' by 200'. There were no indications of construction activity on photography of []. Other observations are as follows:

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(a) The town of Bilibino has a power plant and power traces can be traced northwestward to some mining areas and along the valleys and hills to the Aliskerovo area. This activity was evident on the [] photography and it was probably constructed several months prior to that coverage, for no indicators of new or recent construction were evident (see Figure 4). The exact type of power plant could not be determined on the available photography. There was no evidence of dam construction on any of the rivers and tributaries in the Bilibino-Aliskerovo area.

(b) The town of Aliskerovo is a small mining town and because of its lack of facilities and apparent connections, it appears to be a "satellite" settlement connected to Bilibino (see Figure 2).

(c) In addition to the three towns mentioned above, an unidentified town also located within the area of search is situated along the east bank of the Rauchun (River) approximately 50 nm NE of Bilibino at coordinates 68-29N 168-18E. The town is very similar in appearance to Bilibino, in that it is the hub for the activity in the area, mining located in close proximity to it, storage buildings, and a landing area (see Figure 5). In addition, there is a possible power plant of undetermined type just north of the town.

(d) Placer mining is quite apparent in the valley stream beds throughout the search area. This mining activity appears to be the most important form of industry in the area, probably minerals such as gold or platinum are being recovered.

(e) All of the towns mentioned above are connected to each other by trails or roads. Other means of transportation in the area are by air and some of the rivers appear to be navigable. Although the runways within the search area are small, there is an airfield with a long runway located approximately 125 nm NW of Bilibino at 69-28N 161-45E (15 nm SW of Ambarohik), which could be used to fly material in and out of this area.

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3. The data analyst assigned to this project was Mr. [redacted] who may be contacted directly on extension [redacted] [redacted] should any questions arise concerning this assignment. Also the photographs, enlargements and duplicate negatives that were used in this study and reviewed by you on your recent visit to MPIC, will be stored for possible future use here in FID IB. Should you have any further need to review these, please contact us for arrangements.

[redacted]

Enclosure:

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